

A

Protestant Antidote
Against
POPERY:

With

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67.

A Brief DISCOURSE of the
great Atheisticalness and vain
AMOURS now in Fashion.

Written in a LETTER
to a Young Lady.

By a Person of Honour.

D U B L I N ,

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M A D A M,

I know the Law of Custom has made it not onely an usual favour, but an expected Duty, to compliment at least, if not flatter, such women as men write to, especially the Great Ladies, who think none write well, that do not praise them much, and those write best, who extol them most:

A 3 High

High praises being like good Poetry , Musick in words , the sound of which may be agreeable , but truly to deserve them , requires such a Gygantick size of merit , as is very unproportionable to the slender-wasted Virtues of most Ladies , who are over-eager to receive praises , and over-careless in meriting any , and the grand reason is , because they know they usually have them without it , and that custom must give it , though reason cannot , so obliging is the common courtesie of *England* to Ladies , that it allows them to pretend to all praises as their due , though few deserve any

any as their right. In a word, our *English* Ladies must have their Characters writ, just as the *Dutch* Madams will have their Pictures drawn, that is very handsom, though they themselves be never so ugly.

But, *Madam*, for your part, I know your perfecti-
ons so abundantly, and my own heart so truly, as I must beg the Law of Custom par-
don here, it being beyond my power to flatter, or com-
plement, since I can nei-
ther overpraise your high me-
rit, or out-speak the real love,
and true esteem, I have both for you and them, so that knowing all manner of prai-
ses to be justly due to your me-

A 3 rits,

rits, I find I cannot here make
you a present of any , without doing you an injurie , by
intituling you to those praises
by gift , which all know are
your own by right.

For truly , *Madam* , the
whole progress of your Actions
have still been so highly
virtuous, and religiously strict,
and ever believed , and pro-
claimed such , that though
your Beautie might make bad
men wish you ill , yet your
Vertues hinder the worst from
daring to think you so ; for if
they did , their own hearts
must at the same time con-
demn their own thoughts ,
and declare your innocencie ;
like *Pilate* , who with the same
breath

breath he condemned our Sa-
viour, said, *He found no fault
in him.*

But, *Madam*, though your
virtuous life is so transparent-
ly excellent, yet for all that,
you ought to look on your
unsoil'd reputation as no small
blessing of preservation in
these scandalous times, where
so few Handsom Ladies escape
censure, and so many deserve
it ; for now the extravagancies
of Romance-Amours are
not ~~only~~ daily read, but al-
most hourly practised ; and
women act, more than Ro-
mances can write, whilst the
sober rules of Virtue, and pi-
ous duties of Religion, are
seldom thought on, and most

A 4 rarely

rarely practised, our Youth being generally grown, such fond friends of Mr. Hobbs his Books, as they are become meer strangers to our Saviour's Gospel, they living as if they were all bodies, and had no souls, or had them but to lose, turning Religion into Raillerie, and Gospel into Romance; for thus in short they mangle Scripture, that part which is chiefly Historical, that is their meer Gospel-part; and that which is the Gospel-part, is their meer Historical-part; and because they cannot bring the Gospel to prove their Atheistical reasons, pretend to prove by reason, that there is no Gospel;

and

and if some of them now and then look over a Chapter, they onely pass through it, as a Spie doth an Enemies Country, with a mischievous design; and if they can but find in Scripture a seeming contradiction, that they presently bring on the Stage, as they do Fools in Plays, to raillie with, and make sport at; so great a Jeast our Young Sparks now make of their salvation, as to be pleas'd in the meer displeasing God, without considering 'tis not onely Atheistical madnes, but Devilish follie, to make that their Jeest which they may be damn'd for in Earnest.

Thus our Youth throw a-
way

way their souls, and for their time they care not how they spend it, (alwaies provided it be not religioustly) and therefore they wast it most in the companie of vain women, and are so eager and zealous in their pursuit, and so constant in their service, as if they fancied God was mistaken, and intended creating man for the woman, rather than the woman for the man; but though all know God made the woman for the man: Yet what Critick can tell us whether our new-mode has made the Gallant for the Mistress, or the Mistress for the Gallant; but of this we are all sure, they are so plentifully

ly made for one another, that the *Eastern Country Laws* allow not with more freedom pluralitie of *Wives*, than our *new-English Customs* admit pluralitie of *Mistresses*; Nay, I may yet venture to say more, That the *Libertie* of our men exceeds theirs ; for they are permitted no more *Wives*, than they can well keep, but ours are allowed as many *Mistresses* as they can any way get.

For indeed the Names of *Tom* and *Bess* are hardly more familiar here, than those of *Gallant* and *Mistress*, and are so far from being esteemed Names of discredit, that many of our *Mode Ladies* look on their

their Gallants as Beauty-marks, rather than stains of Reputation, and for all they cannot but know, that the infection of Gallants is as bad as enemy to credit, as the small Pox to Beautie, a common ruiner of it; And though womens Gallants are in plain *English* no better than the publick Executioners of their reputations, and indeed no women will allow them, but such as are willingly condemn'd to suffer (and women that slight reputation are seldom fond of Chastitie) Yet these abusers of love, & murderers of fame, by their fair words and base Arts have so insinuated themselves into their fa-

vor

vours, as the women now forsooth, call their Gallants their Friends, and if common report may be credited, they are indeed their bosom-ones; (and such women as value little what others say, seldom care much what they themselves do) Custome having brought many of our women to that pass, as they now glory in the number of their Gallants, esteeming them rather so many Vouchers of their Beautie, than so many robbers of their Honour, the so usual practice of this scandal, having taken away wemens sense, that like blackness amongst the *Æthiopians*, its commoness has removed

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its deformitie : And there is now such a forward Love-spring in the Nurseries of our Young Ladies, as the very little ones learn to spell Amour with their Fescue , and will pretend to entertain their Young Gallants , in the dark walks of Love, and in the Labyrinth of its Intrigues , before they well know what the thing Love is, or the name of Gallant means , and would have Servants come to them , before they come to the Teens , (the ripeness of their minds outrunning that of their bodies) and fancy men so mad as to believe, 'tis expectation makes a Blessing dear ; but that dull Presbyterian way of

of Love, is now quite out of Fashion, & the loves of our Young Gallants are grown as fickle and meer skin deep, as their Mistresses Fancies and Beauties; and Love-wounds that are but skin deep, can never hurt the heart ; and therefore though every day we hear of Hundreds of Gallants that are dying for love in their Mistresses companie, yet we cannot read of one these many Ages that dyed for Love in the Weekly Bills of Mortalitie, the obliging carriage of the Ladies of the times having made our Young men so healthfully wise, so forwardly bold, or at least so impatiently hastie, as they ex-

pect now a dayes to take Young women, as great Armies do weak Towns, onely by Summons, or Assaults, as not esteeming them worthy the time and trouble of a Love-siege, though their Mistresses were as yielding as *Rome* it self, which Writers say, was never besieged without being taken: that is in short, they hold Handsome women worth enjoying, but not wooing. And that makes our Young men so eager and inconstant in their Amours, as really 'tis a very hard measuring-cast to tell, whether our Young Gallants use now more art, or speed, in the getting or forgetting of their Mistresses.

But

But the best of it is , that the inconstancie of both Sexes are now so equally match'd , that I cannot write more of their Gallants inconstancies , than their Mistresses make good of their own ; for they deal with their Gallants , as their Fashions , that which comes latest is still like'd best , and us'd most . In a word , the constancie and inconstancie of our Young men and women , are just like water , and ice , where one still makes the other , and their loves (ice-like) never last long , and as soon as 'tis dissolv'd , turns immediately to the same it was before , without any alteration or prejudice : Nor can wa-

ter be more apt and readie by the coming of Frost to turn to ice , than our Young men and womens hearts are apt & enclin'd to return to love, at the approach of fresh-fancied Beauty. And truly the inconstancie of our Young men cannot be so great , nor their inclinations so ill , but the tongues of many of our Young women are grown as bad; for now if a Young maid be but cry'd up for handsom, and resolves to continue vertuous , and therefore will not turn vain , and deserve censure, as much as the rest, they will be sure to speak her as bad as the worst, and if they cannot with Justice wound her

her vertue, they will attempt by ill Arts to murder her reputation, (envie being the parent of wicked invention) it being now a Mode-principle amongst most of our handsom women, that no woman that enjoyes a large proportion of Beautie, but must as an unavoidable appurtenance, carry with it a load of scandalous censures (a false Character of some, though too true a one of most) which occasions their not caring how unjustly they increase anothers burthen, in hope to lessen their own load, and by overstretching the miscarriages of others greater than they should be, hope to shrink theirs less than

really they are, vainly fancying that by spattering with dirt and reproach other wemens reputations , were a kind of wiping clean their own , which suits not at all with the mild and moderate rules of Vertue, which onely allows women to correct each others faults , by their good Examples, but not to increase them by their bad censures: For , scandalous censures like Mushroins, grow without any root , so tender , and mutable a thing , is a hand-som womans good Name : there's no taking its true Elevation by any certain outward Rules and measures , Since it depends more on her Neigh.

Neighbours good or bad report, than on her own vertuous, or ill actions; & more on what they say, than what she does; & really such reports are usually so sophisticated with self-concerns, and so strongly byass'd by aversion or inclination, as you may daily hear in common Discourse, both men and women turn virtue into vice, and vice into virtue; and so characterize Good women to be bad, and bad women to be good, speaking not as women deserve, but as they fancy; and therefore it often happens, that many women save their reputations even by a speedy losing their chastity, whilst other women lose their
repu-

reputation in their very defence of it , that is in short , more women lose their reputation in admitting to be much courted (though that be all) than by being ill enjoy'd , and the reason is plain , because the courtship is publick to all , but the injoyment is onely private to themselves , and 'tis more rational Two concerned persons should keep their own councel , than many unconcern'd should keep it for them ; so that it cannot necessarily follow , that the reported reputation or disreputation of handsom' women must needs be the true issue of their merits , but often the by-blow of chance , and therefore

fore common report can be no right rule to measure women's reputations by , for many reports have much of the Devils nature in them , who is a liar from the beginning. And indeed if we but truly consider, we shall find women generally censure one another, not as they are really faultie, but as they appear, and are esteemed handsome; and therefore ugly women have the priviledge of Popes , who cannot err , but may do what they will , and take what libertie they please ; and handsom women will be as far from censuring their actions , as young men from praising their persons , so that really in effect , we find

find most womens censures
are not proportionable to the
ill, others act, but rather suit-
able to the beautie they pos-
sess, which by their leave is a
way of judging, that's both
irrational and uncharitable;
since I am sure none can deny,
but that there are some un-
handsom women, unchast;
and some chaste women hand-
some, for vertue and beautie
are not so declar'd enemies,
but they sometimes meet;
though I cannot deny, but
that vertue which in former
Ages was esteemed one of the
greatest adornments of the
soul, is now so Eclipsed by
the outward beautie of the
bodie, as vertue and piety
/ the

the true inward beautie) can-
not shine out: a good soul be-
ing nothing now in compari-
son of a good face, beautie
being now the Great Em-
press that commands the
whole World, and makes
very Kings to un-King them-
selves and become subjects to
her. And yet this so ador'd
beautie, (which all women are
so ambitious of, and all men so
court) has at best no intrinsick
value in it, but just like riches,
they enjoy most, that are con-
tent with least; since 'tis
not much, but enough, that's
the true measure of satisfacti-
on. But *Madam*, 'tis now
more than time to beg your
pardon, for I find I am stray'd

C both

both beyond the time, and
beside the road of my design'd
Discourse, which is not to
present you a Character, or
List of the fine Ladies, and
mode-vices of the times, they
will require a much wittier
Pen than I pretend to be Ma-
ster of, and a larger Volume
than I design to trouble you
with: but this Character
which indeed merits volumes
of praises, I am sure I can give
you without needing wit,
or abusing of time; and
if I could here cast up the
summe total of all the vices
that your Sex are either guil-
tie of, or scandaliz'd with,
(which I'le assure you are
more than a few) their num-
ber

ber might be tedious to read, but need not be disagreeable for you to hear, since by naming all those faults, they are infected with, I should but tell all those you are free from.

But, *Madam*, my design is now to remove my Batterie, and change my Scene of Writing, as you have your place of Living, and to level my Discourse, not at the vices and pleasures of *London*, nor the pastimes of the Court, but at your Country Neighbours, the Woods and Mountains of *Macroome*, which renders it a place much fitter to exercise your patience, than satisfie your delight,

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were you of the humour of most Ladies ; but all know you are not onely an Excellent woman , but an Extra-ordinary Wife , I mean in Goodness , (for 'tis rare now to meet a Wife that's not extraordinary) for you take as much satisfaction in the cares of well managing and improving your Estate , as most other Ladies delight , in the lavishing theirs ; so that I can truly say , you have not onely brought your Lord a large summe of money for your Portion , but a continued increase of Rent by your Industrie .

And I am sure , *Madam* , if you were now ask't as the
Ph:

Philosopher was, Where was his home ; you would answer now, as he did then, My home is still where my chief business is : so that now your chief concerns and Family, (which is still the good Wives Treasure) being at *Macroome*, I must conclude your heart is there also.

A place where in lieu of *London*, crowds of good Company, & swarms of diversements ; you must prepare to meet with, and do penance to your self, among the Flocks of Priests and Flyers, against whose Popish insinuations, and infectious persuasions, I here present you a small, but necessary Collection of Ar-

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guments to carry about you, as a preservative in your own Religion, and an Antidote against theirs ; and though I cannot pretend this pocket Pistol is a sufficient Battering piece, to beat down their infallible Church, yet I doubt not but it will at least be a sufficient Life-guard to defend you and your Chamber against their assaults.

They are most of them argumentative reasonings I pickt out of Mr. *Chillingworth*, as one that reasons best, and satisfies me most, of any I ever reads; and knowing you want a Collection of choice flowers, I heartily wish that these I have gathered.

ed out of his Garden , and here sorted and made up to present you in a Nosegay , may serve you against the un-pleasing favour of Popish Do-ctrine , and I wish they may not altogether degenerate from the common nature of flowers , which the Natura-list tells us , grow larger and better by being transplanted : so that I hope you will not find them the worse , nor like them the less , for being transplanted , but receive these Arguments just as you do your Rents , without ca-ring whether your Tenants have the Money out of their own bags , or borrow it ; so you have it to supply

C 4 your

your occasions.

Truly, *Madam*, I have taken some pains, and spent much time in reading the Discourses of the Papists against our Religion, and though I have consider'd their Arguments without the least Byas, or antedated prejudice; yet I can give no better a Character of them, than I do of ill Dealers, the more I have to do with them, the worse I like them: they savour much of self-interest, teaching Church Government, before Gospel Obedience, witness their holding Marriage a greater crime in a Priest than Fornication, the one is but forbid by their Churches Law,

Law, which they all know is disputable, the later by the Law of Christ, which they cannot but know, ought to be past all dispute.

And truly, *Madam*, if you please to admit your reason to make but a short progress into the Popish Religion, you shall find much to create your wonder, but little to satisfie your reason or belief; for the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of Truth, and therefore ought still to be pictur'd naked as Truth, without any Art of *Roman* Dresses, which are onely obscure shadings of the true light of Scripture, by making dark Paraphrases on the plainest

nest Gospel Commands, which in all reason ought to be plain enough for the meanest capacity; for God forbid it should be otherwise, for the meanest Christian must be saved or damned, for keeping or not keeping them; and sure God's Justice will never send persons to Hell, for not doing what they could not understand was his Will, they should do; that were such a cruelty, as if a man should torment his servant for not doing his Errant, when he knew he did not understand his Message; yet the Papist must not take these plain Gospel Commands as such, but as they are distill'd in the mysterious

rious politick Lymbeck of the Popish interest : indeed Mystery and Obedience is so interwoven in that Religion, that Papists must take what their Priest tells them, as men do wives , for better , for worse , and must marry their Faith to their Churches infallibility , which allows that onely to be Gospel which their Church sayes shall be , not what the Apostles write is so ; for the Papists must obey the Pope , though nowhere commanded in the Gospel ; but must not read the Gospel , though they are commanded there to do it.

Nay, when once the Papist can but touch the small
Needle

Needle of any ones reason with the Great Loadstone of the Harmonious Doctrine of a necessary Obedience to their infallible Church , then they make such follow it , to every point of the Compass , be it good , bad , or indifferent ; and so they sail all their life , in a Trade-wind of ignorance and superstition , and must believe their Priests words before their own sens- es in the plainest objects of them ; as in the Miracle of Transubstantiation , where you must have eyes and see not , hands and feel not , but must believe in a moment real Bread and Wine to be turned into perfect Flesh and Blood , though

though you cannot see the least change whatsoever , yet they are bound to believe their Priest , before their eyes , smell , or taste , nor dare their Priest say , that the consecrated Bread (which they esteem the real Body of Christ) will be less mouldie , or more uncertain of corruption after Consecration than before ; and the jeaſt of it is , that at the same time the Papists believe that Miracle , they also believe this Scripture , *That God will not ſuffer his Holy One to ſee corruption.* And though for these and many other reasons , I cannot believe this Transubſtantiation-Miracle , yet I cannot but ad-

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mire this Miracle that belongs to Transubstantiation, which is, how the Pope can bring so many, that have sense and reason, to believe it.

But I shall pass by their adoring this Sacrament, their praying to Saints, and a multitude of their superstitious observances never used in the primitive Church; and shall onely desire you, *Madam*, to observe in general, that the Papists follow the Gospel, just as they read *Hebrew*, that's backward; for God plainly commands, that all should search the Scripture. And our Blessed Saviour ordered the Sacrament to be administred in both kinds,

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1 Cor. 11. Chap. 28. v. And St. Paul forbids publick prayers in an unknown Language, but that which is most for Edification, 1 Cor. 14 c. 15, 16. v. But these plain positive commands do not hinder the Church of *Rome* from declaring, that unlearned men shall not read and search the Scriptures; but if we believe St. Paul before the Pope, we may read in the 17. of the *Acts*, 11. v. how he commended the Noble *Bereans* for searching the Scriptures, and therefore if searching the Scriptures had not been not onely lawful, but a commendable act, certainly St. Paul would never have commended

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ed them for so doing. So that the Popish Clergy forbids the reading the Scriptures, under a pretence that their Laity might not truly understand them. Next, the Church of *Rome* allows onely their Clergy (except free Princes, for they are excepters of persons, though God is not) to receive the Communion but in one kind, though our Saviour commands, that all drink of the Cup; and the Papists cannot deny, but that the Communion was taken in both kinds in all Christian Churches for above a Thousand years after Christ.

And Lastly, for the poor vulgar sort, they shall onely hear

hear their publick prayers in an unknown Tongue, *viz.* Latine, which a Tenth part of them do not understand; and therefore how that can be most for Edification, let the Papists tell if they can, I am sure we cannot, nor do we believe they can, without the help of another Transubstantiation-Miracle, and make an unknown Language to most, to be chang'd at the same time into a common known Language to all.

And now, *Madam*, I shall humbly desire you to consider in general, that though the Papists do out-noise us: (as shallow rivers do still the deepest) with the high

and mighty Rodomontades of their Churches infallibilitie ; yet such high Rants , without true proof , are but like School-boyes paper-Kites , which soar high and loftie , but have nothing else worth taking notice of. They will have the confidence to tell you , that their Popish Church is the *Roman* Catholick , and onely true Christian Church in the whole world : But the Protestants Answer to this their boasting , is , that all the Christian Churches in the whole world (besides , the Popish Churches) though more in number than they) declare quite contrary. They will ask you , where your Pro-

Protestant Church was before *Luther*, which was wittily answered by one; (where the Papist Church never was) in the Bible.

The Papists do divert themselves very much at our stiling our King, *Head of the Church*, as we do, for their doing so, for we esteem our King, Head onely in his own Dominions, without the Popes title of infallible; and sure 'tis more rational that those of a Kingdom should allow their King to be *Head of the Church* in his own Kingdoms, than that a few Cardinals should make the *Head of the Church* over all Kingdoms. And for all their Jeasting, I

am sure we can shew (in sober earnest) Scripture·presidents for Kings being Heads of Churches in their own Dominions , which is more than the papists can shew for their Pope , or his Churches infallibilitie : for sure they cannot object against it as new Doctrine (though Doctrine that's new is their greatest Trade) that the Kings of *Ju-dah* , and the first Christian Emperors were Heads of the *Jewish* Churches and in their own Dominions : And *solomon* tells us , *That a Divine Sentence is in the lips of the King , and his mouth trans-gresseth not in Judgement* (which I am sure Popes have not ,

not, witness *Liberius*) and *Solomon* gives the reason, because the Heart of the King is in the Hand of the Lord. If the Papists will pretend so much Scripture for their Pope, I shall onely answer, 'Tis more than ever Protestants read, or the Apostles writ.

The Papists will tell you with a great deal of confidence, that though we say the Bible is the Religion of Protestants, yet there is no Protestant Religion, or Church, mentioned in the whole Creed, which are the Articles of the Christian Faith: and they will tell you, that their Church is the Catho-

tholick Church, and to believe the Catholick Church was an Article of the Christian Faith from the very infancie of the Church in the beginning of the Apostles time, Now let the Papists tell us, if they bring this as an Argument against the Protestant Religion in the Bible, or not; if not, what cause have they to name it, or what need have we to answer it; but if it be one, we make this reply, That the *Roman* Church is no more named in the Apostles Creed, than the Protestant Church is; for the Apostles Creed was made before the *Roman* Church was a Church, and this I am sure they

they cannot deny ; so that since the Catholick Church was then in being , and the *Roman* Church not in being , it must necessarily follow , that the *Roman* Church can not be the Catholick Church mentioned in the Apostles Creed , and consequently is not the Mother-Church , as the Papists would have her to be : thus the Papists have so overcharg'd this Argument to shoot at us , as it recoils and flyes in their own faces .

And of kin to this , is their grand Battering piece of all , which so thunders in the ears of all Papists , and makes the Popes power so absolute , and the poor credulous Papist so

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obedient , and that is the power given by our Saviour to St. Peter , in the 16th of St. Matthew , beginning the 18th verse , *Thou art Peter, and on this Rock I will build my Church , and give thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven ; and whomsoever thou shalt bind on Earth , shall be bound in Heaven ; and whomsoever thou shalt loose on Earth , shall be loosed in Heaven ;* and these words the Papists understand literally , that St. Peter's person is the Rock that Christ builds his Church on , which cannot possibly be , by the verses just following ; for there when our Saviour tells his Disciples of his going

going to Jerusalem , where he must suffer many things , and be killed , and raised again the Third day ; Peter took him , and began to rebuke him ; be it far from thee , Lord , this shall not be unto thee : But our Saviour turned , and said unto Peter , Get thee behind me , Satan , thou art an offence to me , for thou savourest not the things that be of God , but those that be of men . By which words 'tis most clear and evident , that our Saviour did not mean Peters person could be the Rock of the Christian Church ; for if Peter's person had been that Rock meant , sure our Saviour would never have removed it behind him ;

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and it would be not onely irrational, but impious, to believe that Christ would build his **Church on Satan**, for so he calls St. Peter's person; and 'twere as unreasonable to believe that the Rock of Christ's **Church** could be an offence to him as St. Peter's person was, and as improbable again as all this, that Christ's Church, the Foundation of all Christianity, should savour, not of the things that be of God, but those that are of men, as Peter's person did.

Therefore if you will but please to read the words of our Saviour carefully, you shall find they are most plain, for *verse 13th. When Jesus came*

came into the Coast of Cæsarea, He ask'd his Disciples, Whom do men say that I am, and they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets, but whom say ye that I am; and Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God: And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock, (not this person) I will build my Church, that is (upon this Rock of Faith) that I am Christ the Son of the Living God, I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. Now this must necessarily relate to his faith,

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not his person ; for the gates of Hell , that's the power of evil , did prevail against Peter's person , or he had not deny'd and forsworn his Lord and Master again and again ; and been afterwards proved blame-worthy by St. *Paul* to his face , and indeed as blame-worthy as any of his Disciples ; so that 'tis most plain , that Christ's words (of making him the Rock of the Christian Church) related not to his person , but his faith of Christ's being the Son of the Living God .

And for the other part ; whereas the Papists believe a particular favour and power , given by our Saviour to Peter

ter; of the Keys of Heaven ; that was given as much to the Eleven Disciples , as to him , as you may read in the 18th of St. Matthew , & in the 20th of St. John's Gospe l , and the 23, 24. verses ; *As my Father bath sent me , even so send I you , and when he had said this , he breathed on them , and saith unto them , Receive ye the Holy Ghost , whose soever sins ye remit , they are remitted unto them , and whose soever sins ye retain , they are retained.* So that you see this power is general , to the Disciples , and not in particular to St. Peter , more than to any of the rest , as the Papists mis-believe.

The Papists have many such Questions, which I am sure, *Madam*, you have neither the patience to read, nor I the time to write, but those that are most material of them you will find, I have here presented you, truly answer'd, by pure Scripture, clear reasons, plain arguments, and all in few words, fit for the weakest memory, or smallest pocket, to carry about them; for true reason doth not consist in large Volumes, long Gowns, or gray Beards; for many live to One and Twenty, without attaining to years of discretion; the degrees of Age being not still the measures of wisedom, for the world

world will never be without old Fools, and young Philosophers.

And truly, *Madam*, for my part, I cannot so much as think of the Papists Religion without wonder, that so many rational men of them should rather fasten their faith of salvation on the pretended infallibility of their Church (which is deny'd by most Christians) than on the Holy Scriptures, which is granted by all, to be the Will and Word of God; and the very Foundation of their Churches Foundation, as containing in it all things necessary to our salvation. And we Protestants have at least this

satisfaction and advantage, that not onely the Papists, but all sorts of Christians that are in the circumference of the whole world, meet and joyn with us in this centre of Faith, that the Scriptures contain all things necessary to our salvation; which being a general granted Truth, I confess, I admire, how any Papist can make the least scruple, which is the safest Heavenly Guide, the Pope or the Gospel: If there be any rational man so extravagant as to put them in the same ballance, and to commit a rape upon his reason, I shall onely desire him to consider this plain Question; If he

he were to go a Journey in an unknown way, would he not think it more rational and safe to follow a certain true Guide, that all the Christians in the world declare, is certainly able and ready to shew him the right way, than to follow a pretended Guide, which the greatest part of the Christians in the world assures him will lead him out of it; And this being the real difference between the Papist and Protestant in Gross, concerning the Heavenly Guide, the Bible, and the Pope, I think I need now say no more, because so many have already said so much, and I am sure enough.

enough, to satisfie any, except such, who will believe a crooked Rule is better, to draw a straight line by, than a right one.

And now *Madam* I shall onely beg, so much of your patience as to let me tell you, that the plot and Heads of this following discourse, I have Extracted out of the worthy *Chilingworth*. Before I begin the discourse it self; I know in writing a play, to have Rank'd the plot in the Front of it, and to make the whole design of the Prologue to be the Key, to uncipher the plot of the play, (though anciently in use) had been now, not onely out of fashion,

on, but beside reason; For the design of plays, aiming chiefly to please the senses, they ought to be compounded and mixt with hopes and fears, certainties, and uncertainties, Expectations, and delays of the event of the plots which being all so interwoven together, creates the agreeableness of the play; for when once the whole plot is discovered, the pleasure of the play is ended; like Hare-Hunting, the sport lies not in presently taking the Hare, but in following him, in all his Rings and Doubles, and those that love plays, and such Huntings, resemble jealous men, who eagerly pursue what

what they apprehend to overtake, or as old age, which we all pray to attain, but fear to approach.

But now I come to soar my discourse to a much higher pitch, & a more Elevated Subject, and to treat of the most noble part of man, the Soul, and of true Religion the only way to Heavenly felicity, for without Holiness, no man shall see the Lord ; We must therefore now *Madam*, change the Scene of sense for a spiritual one, and climb where earthly nature, can never follow us, to the pure and high Region of Heaven, which will inform us that the earlier discovering our plot of attaining

aining Heaven, will but better the play, and the more speed, the better success : for the joyes of Heaven are everlasting, and admits of no increase or diminution : not like the divertisements of Stage-playes, or Hunting, or any earthly delights, which cannot last, but for a season, and decay in our very injoying them, and must soon leave us, or we them ; but Heavenly thoughts the more and longer we practice them, the better we shall like them ; Heavenly joyes so far exceeding all we can here leave, as they are all we can ever aspire to have ; this we all know, but few of us practice, and

F we

we all love God, but few love
to keep his Commandments.

I shall therefore now *Ma-
dam* tell you, as the Prologue
to my insuing discourse, that
the grand Plot, and whole
design of it, moves chiefly on
these two hinges, first in con-
firming you, that the foun-
dation of the Protestant Re-
ligion is built on God's holy
Word, the Scriptures ; which
we Protestants, esteem to be
a perfect Rule of Faith, and
guide to our actions, and the
true Touch-stone to try all
matters by, that relate to the
good of our Souls, as certain-
ly containing in it, all things
necessary to our salvation.
The second thing I chiefly de-
sign

sign to prove, is, that neither the Pope, or the Popish Church are infallible; and these two shall make up the principal stories, in the little Model of this small building. The pretended infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, is the grand persuasive Argument, and lure to invite men to it, and the strongest commanding Garrison in a' l the Popes power; and all other Arguments, and Perswasions, are but like the small open Villages about this Garrison, which must be servants to them, that are masters of it; and if a Papist can be but once convinc'd, that neither the Pope, nor the Popish

F. 2 Church

Church are infallible, they will soon be brought to reason, and our remaining differences, will not be very considerable: I shall therefore only lightly discourse on them, and shall no further trouble you *Madam*, than briefly, to answer them in my own defence, as I meet them, or as they follow me, and shall only do as the *Wolf* do's when pursued, snap, and bite in his own defence, against all opposers, without altering his pace, or changing his Road: I shall neither meddle with the Papists, but as I meet them in the way, or towards making of my way, to my two designed points, which are (as I said
be

before,) to prove the Scripture to be a perfect Rule of Faith, and guide to our actions: and to answer, as I go, the Papists main Arguments and objections against it.

Next, that 'tis against all Scripture, and reason, that either the Pope, or the Popish Church should be infallible; which is the main design of this discourse, and if I can by God's assistance make but the Papists believe reason, (when against their own Church,) I doubt not but by this little Pigmie discourse (as very dwaſh as 'tis,) not onely to hinder many tottering Protestants from turning Papists, but to bring some stubborn

Papists to turn Protestants, or at least not to have such an infallible good opinion of their Church, and so damnable a bad one of ours.

And now *Madam*, 'tis requisite that this my discourse should be ended, as soon as your Patience; & therefore all that I shall add either to the excusing my self, or justifying Mr. *Chillingworth*, is, that thus far of this discourse being my own writing, I confess, deserves onely my Apology, and scarce your perusal; but the following discourse being extracted out of Mr. *Chillingworth*, deserves your reading, but needs not any Apology.

And

And because I find the word Protestant is so badly, and over-largely interpreted; I shall first acquaint you, that we are not to understand by the word Protestant, the Doctrine of *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or *Geneva*, or onely the Articles of the Church of *England*, but that wherein they all agree with perfect Harmony; that the Bible is a perfect Rule of our Faith, and guide to our Actions; and this (after having made the most diligent, and impartial search of the true way to Eternal happiness.) I fully believe, and that we can never find any convincing satis-

faction, but on this Rock of Gods word, the Bible, which I conceive to be the onely true Religion of Protestants.

If the Pope were indeed (what he unjustly sayes he is, & the Papists unreasonably believe him to be,) an infallible guide, then there needed no Bible, but if the Bible be, then there needs no Pope; for if I were to go a journey, and had a guide that could not err, what need I be taught the way, and having such a guide, what need I apply my self to another: So that in a word let us inform our selves the best we can, and consider as much as we please, the more consideration we take,

take, the more confirmation we shall find, that there is no other foundation for a considering Christian to build an assured dependency on, than the Scriptures, for I am fully assur'd that God do's not; (and therefore man ought not to) require of any man more than this, to believe the Scripture to be the word of God, to use our best indeavours to find the true sense of it, and to live, to our utmost according to it.

This I am sure in reason we ought to believe a wiser choice; Then if I should guide my self by the Roman Churches authority, and infallibility; when really they have

have nothing of certainty, but their uncertainty ; witness Pope against Pope, Councils against Councils, some of their Fathers against others, and rather then fail some against themselves, new Traditions inrolled, and old ones Cashiered, in a word one Church against another, and (if that be not enough) the Church of one age, against the Church of another; Whereas the Scripture being true and unalterable, and containing all things necessary to our Salvation I am secure, that by believing nothing else, I shall believe no falsehood in matter of Faith, & if I mistake the true sense of Scripture, and

and so fall into error ; yet I am secured from any dangerous error, because whilst I am truly indeavouring to find the true ground of Scripture, I cannot but hold my error without obstinacy, and be ready to forsake it, when a more probable and true sense shall appear unto me : and then being assur'd, that all necessary truths are plainly set down in Scripture ; I am certain by believing the Scripture, to believe all necessary truth, and he that do's so, if his life be answerable to his Faith, how is it possible he should fail of Salvation.

And though the Roman Church pretend to be a perfect

fect guide of Faith, and teacher of all Divine Truths; yet sure that Title might much better, and more justly be given to the Scriptures, as their Teacher and Master.

The Roman Church brags how ancient their Church is, but doubtless they cannot deny, but the Scripture is more ancient, if they will but allow the Mother to be older than the Child.

The Papists say their Church is a means of keeping Christians at unity, so are also the Scriptures, to those that believe them in unity of belief, in matters necessary.

The Papists say their Church is Catholick, certainly

ly the Scripture is more Catholick; for all true Christians in the universal world do now, and ever did believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, so much at least, as to contain all things necessary to salvation; whereas the Papists say, They onely are the true Church, and all other Christians (though more than they) give them the lye for saying so.

By following the Scriptures, I follow that whereby the Papists prove their Churches Infallibility; for were it not for Scripture, what pretence could the Papists have for it, or what true Notion could they receive of it; so that by

G so

so doing, the Papists must plainly confess, That they themselves are surer of the Truth of Scripture, than of their Churches Authority; for we must be surer of the proof, than of the thing proved, or else 'tis no proof: so that following Scripture, I follow that which must be true, if the Papists Church be true; for their Church allows it's truth; whereas if I follow the *Roman* Church, I must follow that, which though the Scripture be true, may be false, nay more, must be false, if the Scripture be true, because the Scripture is against it. Following the Papists Church, I must be a
ser-

servant to my Saviour, and a subject to my King, onely at the pleasure of the Pope, and renounce my Allegiance, when the Popes will is to declare him an Heretick; nay, I must believe vertue vice, and vice vertue, if he pleases; for he both makes and unmakes Scripture as he thinks convenient; witness the *Apocrypha*, which hath not past for Canonical, but of late years, in the Papists Church, who interpret Scripture according to their Doctrine, but will not judge their Doctrine according to Scripture, for none like to weigh light Money in true scales. In short, the Pope

G 2 adds,

adds, and lessens, and interprets Divine Laws as he pleases, and they must stand for Laws, and be obeyed as such; so that in effect he rules his people by his own Laws, and his own Lawyers, his Clergy, who dare not speak nor uphold them, other than just such as the Pope would have them; and indeed Cardinal Richelieu gave the reason why more hold the Pope above the Councils, than the Councils above the Pope, because the Pope gave Archbischopricks and Bishopricks, but the Councils had none to give: and though the Papists say, his Holiness cannot err, yet let

Let not the Papists forget what God sayes in the Scripture, if (not onely the Pope) but if an Angel from Heaven shall preach any thing against the Gospel of Christ, let him be accursed.

In following the Scripture we have God's express command, and no colour of any prohibition, but to believe the Popish Church infallible, we have no Scripture-command at all, much less an express one.

Following the Popish Church, we must believe many things, not onely above reason, but against reason, witness Transubstantiation, whereas following the

Scripture, we shall believe many mysteries, but no impossibilities ; many things above our reason, but nothing against it ; Nay, we need not believe any thing, which reason will not convince us we ought to believe ; for reason will convince any sober Christian, that the Scripture is the Word of God, and there's no reason can be greater than this, that God says it, therefore it must be true.

In a word, we Protestants believe, that all things necessary to our salvation, are evidently contain'd in Scripture ; and what is not there evidently contained, cannot be necessary.

cessary to be believed, and our reason is just and clear, because nothing can challenge our Belief, as to salvation, but what hath descended to us from our Blessed Saviour Christ Jesus, by original and universal Tradition; now nothing but Scripture hath thus descended to us, therefore nothing but Scripture can challenge our Belief.

Now the grand difference between the Papists and us, concerning the Scripture, is this; We hold the Scripture to be the onely perfect Rule whereby to judge of Controversies. The Papists say, That they acknowledge the Scriptures to be a perfect

G 4 Rule,

Rule, onely they deny that it excludes unwritten Tradition, which in effect is this; they say, 'Tis as perfect a Rule, as a Writing can be, onely they deny it to be as perfect a Rule as a Writing may be; either they must revoke their acknowledgment, or retract their contradiction of it, for both cannot possibly stand together: for if they will but stand to what they have granted, that Scripture is as perfect a Rule of Faith, as a Writing can be, they must then grant it so compleat, as it needs no addition; and so evident, that it needs no interpretation, for both these properties are requisite

quisite to a perfect Rule: and that a writing is capable of both these properties, and perfections, is most plain, for he that denies it, must say that something may be spoken which cannot be written, for if such a compleat evident rule of Faith, may be delivered by word of mouth, as the Papists pretend may, and is, and whatsoever is delivered by word of mouth, may also be written; then such a compleat and evident rule of Faith, may also be written, for the Argument is most plain, whatsoever may be spoken may be written; a perfect rule of Faith has been spoken, therefore a perfect rule.

rule of Faith may be written; If the Papists cannot see this plain conclusion, they had best desire more light to be added to the Sun:

The Papist pretend their Church to be, the infallible Teacher of all Divine Truths, and an infallible interpreter of all obscurities in the Faith, but the Papists will, I hope, give us leave to admire, how they can pretend to Teach them in all places, without writing them down, that is certainly, beyond the reach of their power to do, as well as our belief that 'tis to be done.

And for the Papists saying there must be a living authority

rity, beside the Scripture, or else controversies cannot be ended; Protestants answer; necessary controversies, are and may be decided, and if they be not, 'tis not the defect of the rule in Scripture, but the default of men; so that if necessary controversies be ended, 'tis no matter if the unnecessary be not; for doubtless if God had required it, he would also have provided some means to effect it; but sure it does not stand with any reason it should be the Pope, because he cannot be a Judge, being a partie; indeed in civil controversies, a Judge without being a partie may end them, but in controversies

sies of Religion, a Judge of necessity must be a concerned partie, and I am sure the Pope to us is the chief, and most concerned partie, being really concerned as much as his Popedom is worth.

Now we Protestants make the Papists this plain answer, that the means of agreeing differences, must necessarily be, either by the appointment of God, or men; men sure it cannot be, for then rational wise Protestants, may doe, as well as Papists, for let the Papists shew us if they can where God hath appointed that the Pope alone, or any confirm'd by the Pope, or that Society of Christians, which

which adhere to him, shall be the infallible Judge of controversies ; we desire the Papists, if they can to let us see any of those assertions, plainly set down in Scripture, as in all reason a thing of this nature ought to be, or at least delivered with a full consent of Fathers, nay let them so much as shew us where 'tis in plain tearms, taught by any one Father, in Four hundred years after our blessed Saviour Christ ; and if the Papists cannot do this, as we believe they cannot ; where I pray is their either Scripture or Reason, that the Pope or his Councils should obtrude themselves as Judges over us Protestants. H Next

Next we would desire to know from the Papists, whether they do certainly know or not, the sence of those **Scriptures**, by which they are led to the knowledge of **their Church**; for if they do not, how come they to know **their Church** is infallible; but if they do, then sure they ought to give us leave to have the same means and ability to know other plain places in **Scripture**, which they have to know theirs; for if all **Scriptures** be obscure, how come they to know the sense of those places; but if some place of it be plain, why pray may not **Protestants** understand them as well as **Papists**.

The

The Papists say, That the Scriptures are in themselves true and infallible, yet without the direction of the Church, we have no certain means to know, which Translations be faithful and Canonical, or what is the true meaning of Scriptures; and this is the common Argument and general Belief of all Papists: To which the Protestants answer, That yet all these things must first be known, before we can know the directions of their Church to be infallible; for the Papists cannot pretend any other proof of it, but onely some Texts of Canonical Scripture, truly interpreted; therefore

either they must be mistaken in thinking there is no other means to know these things, but their Churches infallible direction, or else we must be excluded from all means of knowing her directions to be infallible; for the proof must be surer than the thing to be proved, or 'tis no proof; And upon better consideration, I am confident the Papists dare not deny, but that 'tis most certain, Faith hath been given by other means than the Church; for sure they will not say, that *Adam* received Faith by the Church, nor *Abraham*, nor *Job*, who received Faith by Revelation; and also the Holy Apostles, who

who received Faith by the
miracles, and preaching of
our Blessed Saviour : so that
you see, and they cannot de-
ny, but their general Do-
ctrine is contradictory ; and
to make it yet plainer, I de-
sire to know of the Papists,
if they should meet with a
man, that believed neither
Scripture, Church, nor God,
but declares he is both ready,
and willing to believe them
all, if the Papist can shew
him sufficient grounds to build
his Faith upon, will the Pa-
pist tell such a man, there
are no certain grounds how
he may be converted to their
Church ; or there are ; if the
Papists say there are none,

H 3 they

they make Religion an uncertain thing : but if they say there are , then they must necessarily either argue woman-like , that their Church is infallible , because it is infallible , or else shew there are other certain grounds besides , saying , the Church is infallible , to prove its infallibility .

The Papists demand of the Protestants , if they believe the Apostles wrote all the Scriptures , for if they did not , how come we to call and believe them Apostolical , and not the Writings of those that w^{it} them : To which we answer ; Though all the Scriptures were not written by

by the Apostles themselves, yet they were all confirm'd by them; and though a Clerk writes a Statute, and the King, Lords and Commons confirm it in Parliament; I believe they would esteem it very improper to call it the Statute of such a Clerk, though writ by him, but an Act of Parliament, because it was confirm'd by all their consents, and so becomes their Act, not the Clerks.

The Papist desires us to tell them in what Language the Scriptures remained uncorrupted, and we desire them, to satisfie us whether it be necessary to know it, or not necessary, if it be not, I hope

we may do well without it, but if it be necessary we desire first, that they will please to tell us what became of their Church for One thousand five hundred years together, all which time they must confess, they had no certainty of Scripture; till the time that Pope *Clement* the Eighth, set forth their approved Edition of the vulgar Translation, and none sure can have the confidence to deny, but that there was great variety of Copies currant in divers parts of their Church, and read so, which Copies might be false in some things, but more than one sort of them could not possibly be true

true in all things. And Pope *Sixtus Quintus* his Bible differ'd from Pope *Clement* his Bible, in a multitude of places, which makes us desire to be satisfied of the Papists, whether before Pope *Sixtus Quintus* his time, their Church had any defined Canon of Scriptures or not, for if they had not, then 'tis most evident that their Church was a most excellent keeper of Scripture, for fifteen hundred years together, that had not all that time defin'd, what was Scripture, and what was not, but if the Papist say they had, then we demand, was that set forth by Pope *Sixtus Quintus*, or was it

it set forth by Pope *Clement*, or if by a third different from them both, why do they not name him; if it were that set forth by Pope *sixtus*, then 'tis now condemn'd by Pope *Clement*, if that of *Clement*, 'twas condemned by that of *sixtus*, so that error must necessarily be betwixt them, let them chuse which side they please.

And for the book of *Macabees*, I hope they will allow it defin'd Canonical, before St. *Gregorie's* time, though he would not allow it Canonical, but onely for the Edification of the Church.

We further desire to be satisfied of the Papists, if the book

book of *Ecclesiasticus*, and *Wisdom*, and the Epistle to St. James, were by the holy Apostles approved Canonical, or not, if they were approved by the Apostles Canonical, sure the Papists cannot deny, but they had a sufficient definition and authority, not to question them, and therefore err'd in doing so. And if they were not approved Canonical by the Apostles, with what impudence dare the Roman Church now approve them as Canonical, and yet pretend that all their Doctrine is Apostolical, and if they say these books were not questioned, they should do well to tell which books they

they mean, which were not alwayes known to be Canonical, but have afterward been received by the Roman Church to be such, so that this argument reaches those, as wel as these.

And further we are to consider, that there is not the same reasons, for the Churches absolute infallibility, as for the Apostles, and Scriptures, for if the Church falls into an error, it may be reformed by comparing it with the Rules of the Apostles Doctrine in Scripture, but if the Apostles have err'd in delivering the Doctrine of Christianity in Scripture, then the Roman Church cannot be infalli-

fallible, for Apostles, Prophets, and Canonical Writers, are the foundation of the Church, as St. *Paul* sayes 'tis built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets.

And now to conclude this part of my discourse in very few words, let the Papists answer, if they can but these five words. All Scripture is Divinely inspired. Let them shew us so much for the Roman Church, and shew us if they can, where 'tis written in Scripture, that all the decrees of the Popish Church are Divinely inspired, and all our Controversies will be at an end, but I believe they can

I never

never do that, without another *Transubstantiation* miracle of words.

The Papists desire us to shew them an exact Catalogue of our fundamentals, to which we answer, That God may be sufficiently known to one, and not sufficiently declared to an other, and consequently that may be fundamental, and necessary to one, which is not to another; which variety of circumstances renders it impossible to set down an exact Catalogue of fundamentals, for God requires more of them to whom he gives more, and less of those to whom he gives less, more of a Commander of a Kingdom,

dom , than a poor simple Turn-spit. 'Tis a plain revelation of God to us Protestants , that the Sacrament of the Eucharist should be administered in both kinds, *1 Cor. 11 c.28 v.* And that the publick Hymns and Prayers of the Church , should be in such a Language as is most for Edification , *1 Cor. 14, and 15, 16.* yet the Church of *Rome* , not seeing this, by reason of the vail , would be very angry, if we told them 'twould prejudice their supposed infallibility.

We read in St. *Matthew* , that the Gospel was to be preacht to all Nations , and this was a truth revealed be-
I 2 fore

fore our Saviours Ascention, yet if the Church had been asked, before the conversion of *Cornelius*, they would have certainly told you, it had not been necessary to teach all Nations; for 'tis most apparent out of the 11th of the *Acts*, they all believed so, until St. Peter was better informed by a vision from Heaven, and the conversion of *Cornelius*; and then they turn'd quite of a differing belief, and esteemeed it necessary to teach all Nations, and yet were still a Church: The Papists are pleased to say, the Protestants differ in Fundamentals, which indeed appears to us very irrational; for

for if they say , We Protestants differ in Fundamentals, how then can they say , We are members of the same Church , one with another , more than they are with ours , or ours with theirs ; and why do they object our difference more with one another , than with themselves ; and if we do not differ in Fundamentals , why do they upbraid us , with Fundamental differences amongst our selves . We believe the Catholick Church cannot perish , yet we believe she may and did err , as I prov'd just before : but thus much we Protestants declare in general , that we esteem it sufficient for any

mans salvation to believe
Geds Word , the Scripture,
and that it contains all things
necessary to our salvation,
and that we do our utmost
endeavours to find , believe,
and follow the true sense of it;
and being we are sure , that
all that is any way necessary
is there , believing all that is
there, we are sure we believe
all that is necessary.

And therefore 'tis but reasonable to say , that any private person , who truly believes the Scriptures , and heartily endeavours to know the Will of God , and to do it , is as secure , nay securer from the danger of erring in Fundamentals , than the *Roman*

man Church: for 'tis impossible any man so qualified, should fall into an error, that can prove damnable to him; for God requires no more of any man to his salvation, but onely his true and best endeavours to be saved: And for the Papists Sacrament of Confession, which they hold is so absolute and necessary, and so much upbraid us for the want of it, we answer, We know no such absolute necessity of it; {but yet we hold, we must not onely confess our sins, but forsake them, or we shall not find mercy: And we Protestants farther believe, that they that confess their sins, shall

shall find mercy, though they
only confess them to God,
and not to man: And more,
that they who confess them
both to God and man, and
do not in time forsake them,
shall not find mercy.

And so for the Papists Sa-
crament of Repentance for
Remission of sins, though we
Protestants know no such;
yet we allow, and observe
the same Duty, but publick
before the Church, which
was the constant practice of
the primitive Church; and
Rhemanus himself, though so
great a Champion for the Pa-
pists, writes, That the con-
fession then used, was be-
fore the Church; and that

au.

Auricular confession was not
seen in the World.

The Papists will tell you
that our Bishops have not the
true power of Ordination,
but that has been so clearly
answered, and so truly pro-
ved at large by so many al-
ready, as I shall not need here
so much as to name it: onely
let me in a word, remember
the Papists, that they cannot
well deny, but that the Do-
natis themselves whom the
Papists esteemed as bad as us,
as being Hereticks, and Schis-
maticks ; yet St. *Austin*, and
Optatus Bishop of *Rome*, did
both acknowledge that they
had the same Baptism, Creed,
and Sacrament, and that these
Do-

Donatist Fathers, though Schismaticks, and Hereticks, gave true Ordination, or else some of these were not then esteemed Sacraments; therefore let them take which they please, there must be error of one side.

The Papists pretend they have an unanswerable objection against Protestants, which is, That we have discords in matters of Faith, without, any means of agreement: to which we answer, that the Scripture does not let us want solid means of agreement in matters necessary to salvation, and for our agreement in all controversies of Religion, either they must say we have means

means to agree about them, or we have not ; if they say we have ; why did they before deny it, if they say we have no means, why are they so unjust to find fault with us for not agreeing ; when they themselves, say we have no means to agree.

But for a Plaister to this soar, they are so extraordinary civil, as to tell us, we may come to their Church : and they agree in matters of faith, but the plain truth of it is, that they define all matters of faith, to be those wherein they agree ; so that to say the Roman Church does agree in matters of Faith, is but to say, they agree in those things, they

they do agree in, and sure
they cannot deny, but we
Protestants do the same.

But we must desire the Pa-
pists to give us leave to tell
them, that they most grossly
mistake, if they say, they a-
gree in matters of Faith, as
for proof; some of them hold
it against Faith, to take the
Oath of Allegiance, others
'tis against Faith to refuse
that Oath.

Some hold it of Faith, that
the Pope is head of the
Church by Divine Law: o-
thers the contrary, some hold
it of Faith that the blessed
Virgin was free from actual
sin, others the contrary; some
that the Popes power over
Prin-

Princes in Temporalities is *defide*, others the contrary : some that 'tis universal Tradition that the Virgin *Mary* was conceived in actual sin , others the contrary ; And how the *Jesuites* and *Franciscans*, and other Orders differ to this day ; I am sure needs no *memorandum* ; and the best Jeast of all is , the Papists have not so much as yet agreed in their very pretended means of agreement , and yet have the confidence to pretend an Unity more than the Protestants ; for some of them say , the Pope with a Council may determine all Controversies , others deny it : Some hold , That a ge-

K ne-

neral Council , without a Pope , may do so , others deny this : Others say , Both in conjunction are infallible Determiners , others deny this : And some among the Papists hold , The acceptation of the Decrees of Councils by the Universal Church , is the onely way to decide Controversies , which others deny by denying their Church to be infallible ; and yet every part , pretends to be part of the Church .

In a word , can the Papists deny , but that there has been Popes , against Popes , Councils against Councils ; Nay , Councils confirmed by Popes , against Popes confirm-

firmed by Councils. And Lastly, The Church of some Ages, against the Church of other Ages; and since every part of the Body is so out of order, methinks they should not brag of so perfect a health as they do.

The Papists say (and do but say it) that their Doctrine is held Catholick; and therefore they esteem it an insolent madness of us Protestants, to dispute against the practice of the whole Church; First, That their Doctrine is Catholick, we answer; That the greatest number of Christians in the world deny it; so that they cannot truly say, we dispute against the pra-

Etice of the whole Church ;
 And farther we say , suppos-
 sing we should in compleinent
 to them grant , that their
 Church is Catholick and Uni-
 versal ; yet we say , That is
 no sufficient proof , it came
 originally from the Apostles ,
 witness the Doctrine of the
Milenaries , and the necessity
 of the Eucharist for Infants ,
 which was generally taught
 by the Universal Church , and
 believed as Apostolical Tra-
 dition , but yet contradicted
 by the Universal Church af-
 terwards : This , I am sure ,
 the Papists dare not deny ; so
 that we unavoidably cast the
 Papists upon this Rock , that
 they must either conclude
 the

the Apostles were Fountains
of contradictorie Doctrines ;
or that the Universal
Doctrine of the present
Church is no sufficient proof,
that it came originally from
the Apostles ; because the
Church Universal of one time,
and the Church Universal of
another time did differ.

Next for their saying , 'tis
insolent madness to dispute
against the practice of the
whole Church , First we are
sure , we can bring more
Christian witnesses , that de-
ny they are the whole Church ,
than they can bring to prove
it : but supposing we were
as mad as they say we are ,
and would have us to be , to

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dispute against the whole practice of the Church, yet I hope we may desire to know of the Papists if they can deny, but that 'twas the practice of the whole Church in St. *Au'stine's* time, and esteemed then an Apostolical Tradition even by St. *Au'stine* himself, that the Eucharist should be administered to Infants; And then let them tell us, Whether it be insolent madness to dispute against the practice of the whole Church, or is it not; if it be not, why do they accuse us for it; but if it be insolent madness, how mad and insolent is the Papist Church, not onely to dispute against this practice of the Uni-

Universal Church, of admini-
string the Eucharist to Infants,
but utterly abolishing the pra-
ctice of it.

So that the very worst the
Papists can say of us, allow-
ing what they say to be true,
is that we but do, what they
themselves own already to
have done.

And though the Papists
are pleased to say that the
Holy Scriptures, and ancient
Fathers, assign separation from
the visible Church, as a mark
of Heresie, yet they cannot
shew one plain Text of Scri-
pture to confirm it.

And for the Papists brag-
ing of the Antiquity and uni-
versality of their Churches

Doctrine, (though we allow it very ancient, (bating the primitive times) we answer first as to its Antiquity, we desire to see what Antiquity they can shew for their giving the Communion but in one kind, when they know that the Administring it in both kinds, was the practice of the Church for a Thousand years after Christ ; what Antiquity for the lawfulness and expediency of the Latine service, for the present use of indulgences ; For the Popes power in Temporalities over Princes ; for the Picturing the Trinity ; For the lawfulness of worshipping Pictures and Images ; For their Beads ;

For

For their whole worship of the blessed Virgin ; For their Oblations, in the notion of Sacrifices to her, and other Saints ; For their saying *Pater Nosters* and *Creeds* to the Honour of them, and *Ave Marias* to the Virgin *Mary* ; For the infallibility of the Bishop, or Church of *Rome* ; For their Doctrine of the blessed Virgins immunity from actual sin ; For the necessity of *Auricular Confession* ; For the necessity of the Priests intention to obtain benefit by any of their *Sacraments*. And lastly for their licentious Doctrine in holding, that though a man lives and dies without the practise of any Christian ver-

virtue, and with the Habits of many damnable sins unmortified ; yet if at the last moment of his life , he has any sorrow for his sins, and joyn confession to it, he shall certainly be saved : This is a Doctrine may keep many souls out of Heaven, but I doubt will scarce carry any one there. So that the Papists Doctrine being ancient, is nothing, as long as 'tis evident that they hold many dangerous errors, as for instance , the *Milenaries* , and the *Communicating Infants* was more ancient, than their Doctrine, and 'tis plain that antiquity, unless it be absolute and primitive, is not a certain

tain sign of true Doctrine: And the very Apostles themselves, assure us that in their dayes, the mystery of Iniquity was working.

The Papists demand how comes it to pass that their Doctrine is so universal, (forgetting that weeds spread faster than good herbs:) And we ask them how the errors of the *Milenaries*, and the *Communicating Infants* became so universal, let them tell us this, and we will tell them that, for what is done in some, may be done in others.

The Papists ask us where our Church was before *Luther*, and tell us, because

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t'was no Church before him, therefore it can be no true Church at all. To which we answer, that this cause is no cause; For though *Luther* had no being before *Luther*, yet none can deny, but that he was, when he was, though he could not be before he was; So there may be a true Church after *Luther*, though there was none for some ages before him: as since *Columbus* his time there have been Christians in *America*, though there were none for many Ages before: for it does not follow, that nothing but a Church can possibly get a Church, nor that the present being of a true Church depends

pends necessarily upon the perpetuity of a Church in all Ages; for though I cannot deny the Churches perpetuity, yet that's not here necessary to our difference; but that a false Church (by Gods providence over ruling it) may preserve a means of confuting their own Heresies, and so reduce men to truth, and raise a true Church, (I mean the integrity of the word of God with men.) Thus the Jewes preserve means to make men Christians, and Papists preserve means to make men Protestants, and the Protestants false Church, (as the Romanes call it,) preserves men Papists,

pists : nor does it appear that the perpetuity of the Church, is the truth of the Papists Church, for they speak, as if they were the onely Christians in the World before *Luther*, when the whole World knowes, that this is but talk, and that there were other Christians besides the Papists that might have perpetuated the Church, though there had not been then one Papist in being : for sure there was a Catholick Church before the Roman one. Next the Papist say, to hold that the visible Church is not perpetual, is a Heresie, so that *Luther's* Reformation being but particular, and not universal, nor but of

of late date, it can have nothing to do with the visible and perpetual Church ; which the Protestants answer thus : To say the visible Church is not perpetual, is properly a Heresie, but the Papists cannot deny, but that the Apostles who preach'd the Gospel in the beginning, did believe the Church universal, though their preaching at the beginning was not so : So *Luther* also might well believe the universal Church, though his Reformation was but particular, the Church in the Apostles time being universal *de jure* of right, but not *de facto* in fact.

Nor did *Luther* and his followers (as the Papist are pleased to mis-call many Protestants) forsake the whole Church, but the corruptions of it, in renouncing some of their corrupt practices, and this the Protestants say they did without Schism, because they had cause to do it, and no man can have cause to be a Schismatick, because he is onely one who leaves the Church without a cause; for 'tis not onely seperation, but a causeless separation from the Church, that is Schismatrical: and I think t'will not be amiss, before I go any farther, to distinguish the difference between Heresie, and Schism.

Heresie

Heresie is an obstinate defence of any error against any necessary Article of the Christian Faith. Schism is a causeless separation of one part of the Church from another. Now we Protestants say still, that we never forsook the whole Church, or the external Communion of it, but onely that part of it which is corrupted, and is to be fear'd will still continue so ; viz. *The Papist Church* ; and forsook not , but onely reformed an other part, which part they themselves were : and sure the Papists will not say, the Protestants forsook themselves, nor their own Communion : and therefore the Papists ar-

gument must be very weak in urging, that the Protestants joyned themselves to no other part of the Church, therefore they must separate from the whole Church; which the Protestants say is a false conclusion, in as much as they themselves were part of it, and still continue so; and therefore the Protestants could no more separate from the whole, then from themselves.

So that by the Rule of Reason, if Protestants be Schismaticks, because they differ from one part of the visible Church, by the same reason the Protestants may say that the Roman Church is

is in a manner made up of Schismaticks, for the *Jesuits* are Schismaticks from the *Dominicans*, and the *Dominicans* from the *Jesuits*, and the *Jesuits* from the *Cannanists*: the *Franciscans* from the *Dominicans*, and the *Dominicans* from the *Franciscans*; for all these (as the World knowes) differ in point of Doctrine, and betwixt them there is an irreconcileable contradiction; and therefore one part must be in error. And if the Papists will but stand to justifie what they declare as truth, *that every error against a revealed truth is a Heresie*, they holding for certain as a revealed truth, the

immaculate conception of the *Virgin Mary*, then consequently the *Dominicans* that hold and declare it an error in *Doctrine*, must necessarily hold a *Heresie*; Now it may be a fault to be in error, because it many times proceeds from a fault; but sure *Protestants* forsaking error, it cannot be a sin, unless to be in error, be a virtue: so hardly do *Papists* deal with us *Protestants*, as they will either damn us in making us follow their false opinions, or else brand us as *Schismaticks* for leaving them.

And yet the rational sort of *Papists* can hardly deny, but the *Protestant Religion* must

must be a safer Religion than theirs, in worshipping Pictures, in Invocating Saints, and Angels; in denying the Lay-men the Communion in both kinds, as was commanded by our blessed Saviour; in celebrating their Church Service in an unknown Tongue, which was condemned by St. Paul. in adoring the Sacrament; and in all these a rational Papist cannot deny, but he is on the more dangerous side, as to the committing of sin, and the Protestant in the more secure way as to the avoiding it. For in all these things, if Protestants say true, the Papists do that which is impious; but on the other side, if the Papists were

were in the right, yet the *Protestants* might be secure enough too; for their fault would be onely this, that they should onely, not do some things which the *Papists* themselves confess is not altogether necessary to be done.

And truly the *Protestants* are so charitably civil, as onely to say of *Papists*, as St. *Augustine* did of the *Donatists*, *That Catholicks approved the Doctrine of the Donatists, but abhorred their Heresie of Re-baptization.* So *Protestants* approve the Fundamental and necessary Truths which the *Papists* retain, by which many good souls among them may be saved, but abhor the many

many superstitions they use in their Religion. And supposing these errors of the Popish *Church* were in themselves not damnable, to them that believe as they profess; yet for us *Protestants* to profess what we do not believe, and esteem those as Divine Truths, which we believe not to be either Divine or true; would be doubtless damnable as to us: for 'tis certain, Two men may do the same thing, and it may be sinful to one, and not to the other: as suppose a married woman gives her self out to be a widow, and one knowing her Husband to be alive, marries her, doubtless his joy

joyment of her was adulterous but a second man comes, and after seeing her pretended Husband buried, marries her, and dies without the least information of her First Husbands being then alive, his ignorance sure protected him from sin, and the second Husbands knowledge of the sin he acted, condemned him of Adultery; and though his fault might be palliated with some excuses, yet it can never be defended by any just Apology: And so though we read in Scripture, that it was St. Paul's Judgment, that meat offered to Idols might lawfully be eaten; yet he says, if any should eat

eat it with a doubtful conscience, he should sin, and be condemned for so doing.

And supposing we Protestants ought not to have forsook the Papists Church, for sin, and errours, if she had not enjoyn'd and imposed them on us; yet since she does maintain them with such obstinacy, and imposes them with such Tyranny, we ought certainly to say with St. Peter, and St. John, *'Tis better to forsake men than Gods* and leave the Popish Church communion, rather than commit or profess known errours as Divine Truths; for as the Prophet *Ezekiel* tells us, that to say *The Lord hath said so,*

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when the Lord hath not said so, is a high presumption, and great sin, be the matter never so small; and therefore when St. Paul spoke concerning Virgins abstaining from marriage, he said, *He had no commandment of the Lord, but I declare my own judgement of it.* Now if St. Paul had given this as God's command, surely we might have justly contradicted him, and made a distinction between divine Revelation, and humane Judgement.

So that for a Protestant to abide in the Communion of the *Roman Church*, is so far from securing him from error, as that if I, or any

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Protestant should continue in it, I am confident I could not be saved by it, and the reason is, because the Papists will not admit of my communion, without professing the entire Popish Doctrine to be true; and profess this I cannot, but I must perpetually exulcerate my conscience: and though the errors of the Roman Church were not in themselves damnable, yet for me to resist known Truths, and to continue in the profession of known Errors and Falshoods, is certainly a capital sin, and of great affinity with the sin which shall never be forgiven.

In short, if the errors of
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the *Roman Church* did not warrant our departure, yet the tyrannous imposition of them would be our sufficient justification; for they force us either to forsake the *Papists Communion*, or profess as *Gospel truths*, what our conscience assures us is very little a kin to them: so that the *Protestants* were oblig'd to forsake those errors of the *Popish Church*, and not the *Church*, but the errors, and we *Protestants* did, and do still continue members of the *Church*, having onely left what appear'd most plain to us, to be *superstitions* and *impious*. And we separate no more from the *Popish Church*, then

than she has separated from the *Ancient Church*; and indeed; to speak properly, our difference is more against the *Court*, than *Church of Rome*, which has introduced so many new ceremonies and practices in the *Popish Church*, as was never heard, nor practised in the primitive Times; as for one instance of a Thousand, I might give you; *Their denying the cup to the Laity*, which was never practised in the *Church* a Thousand years after our *Saviour*.

But because the *Papists* brag so much of, and depend so entirely on, the *infallibility* of their *Church*, I shall

pafs by their Out-works, and search a little into this their Grand Fort , the *infallibility* of their Church ; for except they prove that , they prove nothing ; but in proving that they prove all ; and if the *Papists* could satisfie me either by *Scripture* , or *Reason* , that their *church* is *infallible* , I should not onely be of their *church* to morrow , but repent I was not sooner ; but really by all that I ever heard or read , for their making it good ; I find cause onely to admire their confidence , but not at all to esteem their reasons.

The chief Method they take, and degrees they use ,

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to prove the *infallibility* of their *Church*, are by wholesale these. First, that St. Peter was Head and chief amongst the *Apostles*, and that there was given to him and his successors by our *Saviour*, Universal Authority over his Militant *Church*; That the Pope or Bishop of *Rome* is St. Peter's Successor, and has his Authority of Universal Bishop, and consequently the *Roman Church* being built upon this *Rock*, is *infallible*, all which I doubt not, but to prove, to be inconsistent with, and contradictory both to *Scripture* and *Reason*.

As to the first point of St. Peter's being Head of the *Apo-*

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files, which the Papists all
stile him, and say he was
called from thence *Cephas*,
which is derived from the
Greek word Head, it is
a most gross mistake; for *Ce-
phas* is a *Syriack* word that si-
gnifies *stone*; but this is one-
ly by the by: Now we Protes-
tants say, though we allow
St. Peter might have primacy
of Order; yet we cannot
grant he had supremacy of
power over the other *Apo-
stles*; for sure it cannot stand
with the least reason, that St.
Peter should have authority
over all the *Apostles*, and yet
never act the least authority
over any one of them.

Nor is it reasonable to
be.

believe, that St. Peter having authority over all the *Apostles* for about 25 years together, should never shew the least power over any of them all that time, nor so much as receive the least subjection from them; sure any one must think this as strange, and unreasonable, as if a King of *England* for 25 years together should not do one Act of Regality among his subjects, nor receive any one acknowledgement from them.

Nor sure is it less strange and unreasonable, that the *Papists* should so many Ages after, know this so certainly, as they pretend they do, and yet that the *Apostles* themselves.

selves; after that these words were spoke in their hearing by vertue whereof St. Peter is pretended to be made their head, should still be so ignorant of it, as to question our Saviour, *which of them should be the greatest*, by which sure we may rationally conclude, they did not then know; for if they did, their question had been needless, and superfluous, in desiring to be taught, what they already knew.

And what yet appears more strange then all, is that our Saviour should not have helped them out of their error by telling them St. Peter was the man, but rather confirmed them in the contrary

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by saying the Kings of the Gentiles exercise Authority over them, but it should not be so among them.

And again it is as strange and unreasonable, that St. Paul should so farr forget both St. Peter, and himself, as in mentioning so often St. Peter, he should still do it without ascribing him any title of honour : Nor does it stand with reason, that St. Paul speaking of the several degrees of men in the Church, should omit giving St. Peter the highest, if it had been his due ; but place him in the same rank and Equipage with the rest of the Apostles, for St. Paul sayes God hath appointed

pointed (not first St. Peter then the rest of the Apostles) but *first Apostles, secondly Prophets*, now certainly if *Apostles were all first*, that is all equal, how could one be in greater power than the other.

But besides all this, though we should grant against all these probabilities, and many more, that *Optatus* Bishop of *Rome*, meant that St. Peter was head of the *Apostles*, yet sure the *Papists* are still very farr from proving, the Bishop of *Rome* was to be so at all, much less by divine right, successor to St. Peter in his headship and Authority. For what incongruity is there, if

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we say, that *Optatus* might succeed St. Peter as his heir and successor, in that part of his Government of that particular **Church of Rome**; (as sure he did even whilst St. Peter was living) and yet that neither he, nor any man was to succeed him in his Apostleship, nor in the Government of the Church universal: as though a Bishop should leave his Son heir to all he dyed possessed of, I hope you will not conclude, therefore he must necessarily succeed him in the Bishoprick he dyed seized of. The *Apostles* were men all called, and divinely inspired by the *Holy Ghost*, which was the immediate

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gift of *God*, and therefore could not be left as a Legacy by man ; for though it be in any mans power to leave his Estate, yet 'tis in no mans power to leave to his Son, his acquir'd parts at his death. 'Tis further worth your observing, and special notice, that St. Peter himself and the rest of the *Apostles*, by laying the foundation of the *Church*, were to be themselves the foundation of it, and are accordingly so called in *Scripture*. And therefore as in a building 'tis incongruous that foundations, should succeed foundations, so it may be in the *Church*, that Apostles should succeed *Apostles*, the *Church*

Church being built upon
Apostles and Prophets.

Nor indeed does the grand argument of the *Papists*, for their *Pope*, extend any further in Reallity then to the particular *Sea of Rome*; for thus goes their main argument. St. Peter was first Bishop of *Rome*, and the *Apostles*, did not then attribute to themselves, each one his particular *Chair* (understand in that City of *Rome*, for in other places, others had *Chairs* besides St. Peter) and therefore sayes the *Papist*, he is a Schismatick who against that one single *Chair* erects another: (understand still in the same place) and this is the

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ground & the Authority the Papists say, the Pope has to be Successor to St. Peter, and to exercise Authority over the Universal Church.

But sure the Protestants urge more rationally in arguing thus, That St. Peter wrote Two Catholick Epistles, in which he mentions his own departure, and writes to preserve the Christians in the faith: but yet in neither of these Two Epistles does he commend the Christians to the guidance and authority of his pretended Successor the Bishop of Rome; which sure if St. Peter had intended, he would never have forgot to have named it.

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And since the *Papists* so reverence and adore the *Popes* power, let us *Protestants* also admire his way and means of attaining this power ; for though the *Papists* say, that as soon as he is made *Pope*, he has his authority immediately from *Christ* ; yet at the very same time the *Papists* all know, that he cannot be made *Pope*, but by Authority and Election of the *Cardinals* ; so that I am sure by the very same reason, any man that is chosen a Magistrate in any Town under the *Pope's* Territories, may claim his Authority as immediately received from *Christ*, as well as the *Pope*. And further, that the

proving his being made *Pope*, does not render him infallible, I could give a hundred instances out of the History of *Popes*, but that will not suit well with my designed brevity; but let's ask the *Papist*, if *Liberius* Bishop of *Rome*, after Two years Banishment, did not by the solicitation of *Fortunatianus* Bishop of *Acquileia*, subscribe to Heretie, and consequently could not be infallible. And though the *Papists* rely so much on the Authority of the Fathers, to support and justifie the infallibility of their *church*, yet upon true Examination we shall find, they make no more for their Universal Bishop, than

than St. Peter's Two Catholick Epistles do.

And for their arguing out of St. Cyprian's 55 Epistles; that sure makes rather against, than for them; for there St. Cyprian writes to **Cornelius** Bishop of *Rome*, but writes not so much to him, as of himself, who was Bishop of *Carthage*; against whom a Faction of Schismaticks had set up another Bishop: Now though the Papists say reasonably, that 'tis a mark of the Universal Bishop, that other Bishops should make their Addresses unto the Bishop of *Rome*, yet sure 'twere better Reasoning to conclude thus, If the Bishop of *Rome* had

been acknowledged Universal Bishop, and his Authority and Supremacy had been believ'd and own'd, sure St. *Cyprian* had not been satisfied with onely barely writing him his sad story, (for he did no more,) but doubtless would have made his complaint to him, and desired and expected redress from him, as Universal Bishop over the whole *Catholick Church*, but his not doing so, argued he esteem'd him Bishop onely of one *Church*.

And further, St. *Cyprian* all know, did resolutely oppose a Decree of the *Roman Bishop*, and all that adhered to him in that one point of

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Rebaptizing, which the *Papish Church* at that time delivered as a necessary Tradition, and Excommunicated the Bishop of *Cappadocia, Galatia*, and all that were against that Tradition, and would not so much as allow them lodging or entertainment in *Rome*.

Now since the *Papists* affirm, that not to re-baptize those, whom Hereticks had baptized, to be a damnable Heresie. 'Tis well worth asking the *Papist*, when this begun to be so; for if they say, from the beginning it was so, then they must maintain a contradiction; for then was St. *Cyprian* a Professor of

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damnable Heresie, and yet the Papists esteem him a Saint and Martyr.

And on the other side, if 'twere not so from the beginning, then did the Pope wrongfully excommunicate those other *Churches of Capadocia and Galatia*, without sufficient ground of Excommunication, and separation, which by their own Tenents, is schismatical; so let them chuse which side they please, the Pope was in an errour.

And though *Victor Bishop of Rome* obtruded the Roman Tradition touching the time of *Easter*, upon the *Asian Bishops*, under the pain of Excommunication, and Dam-

Damnation ; yet we read that *Irenæus*, and all the other Western Bishops , though they did agree with the Bishop of *Rome* in his observation of *Easter* , yet they did sharply reprehend his excommunicating the *Arian* Bishops , for their disagreeing with him ; which most plainly argues , that the Western Bishops thought that not a sufficient ground of Excommunication , which the Bishop of *Rome* did ; and therefore it must necessarily follow , they did not esteem the *Roman* Bishop infallible , nor the separation from the *Church* of *Rome* an Heresie. And this I am sure is true and undeni-
ble reason.

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The **Popish** Story tells us, That *Optatus* Bishop of *Rome* upbraided the **Donatists** as **Schismaticks**, because they held no Communion with the **Church of Rome**, by adding afterwards that they were **Schismaticks**, for they held no Communion with these **seven Churches of Asia**, which occasions this Question of the **Papist**, Whether a separation from these **seven Apostolick Churches**, was a mark of Heresie, or not; if they say it was not, how comes it that the Pope's Authority is a stronger Argument for the **Popish Church**, than the **Asian Authority** for the **Asian Churches**; And if the Papists say,

say, a separation from those seven *Asian* Churches was a mark of Heresie, then they must confess their Church was for many years Heretical as separating many years from the *Asian* Churches.

And Polycrates Bishop of *Ephesus* and Metropolitan of *Asia* despised the Popes universal Supremacy and Authority, and kept contrary to the Pope *Easter-day*, the Fourteenth of *March*.

And indeed though the Papists do so much quote the authority of the Fathers, yet I find they as little befriend their Churches infallibility, as the *Asian* Bishops themselves have done, for though

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the Papist say St. Hierome conceived it necessary to conform in matters of Faith, to the Church of *Rome*; yet before the Papist brag of that, let them answer us this, how came it then to pass, that St. Hierome chose to believe the Epistle to the Hebrews Canonical upon the authority of the Eastern Church, and to reject it from the Canon of the Roman Churches Authority. And how comes it also that he dissented from the Roman Church touching the Canon of the old Testament, let the Papist take heed of losing their Fort, by endeavouring to maintain their out-works.

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And now to conclude this point, and excuse the Papists mistake concerning their universal Bishop, we read in Scripture of the Prophet *Elias*, who thought there was none left beside himself in the whole Kingdom of *Israel*, who had not revolted from God; and yet God himself is pleased to assure us he was deceived; And if a Prophet, and one of the greatest err'd in his judgment, touching his own time and Country, why may not the Papists (subject to the same passions) err in their opinion, and judgment about the Popes being universal Bishop, when plain reason tells them, as well as us, that

there were other Bishops as much universal as the Pope.

I now come to examine this infallible Pope, whether he cannot make his infallible **Church** more infallible than he has made himself, and free the Popish Church from error, though he could not the Pope from Heresie.

Now towards the disproving the pretended infallibility of the *Roman* Church, I lay this as the foundation of my discourse, that the whole *Roman* Church can be no better then a Congregation of men, whereof every particular, not one excepted, and consequently the generality, is nothing but a collection of men,

men, and if every one be polluted, (*as who dare say he is free from sin*) how can the whole but be defiled with error ; as reasonably may a man brag he is in perfect health and strength, and yet at the same time confess he hath not one sound part about him. And truly it very much creates my wonder, but does not in the least satisfie my reason, what the *Papists* can pretend by the infallibility of their *church*, for if they will allow their *Pope* to be no better than St. Peter was ; their *Church* to be composed of no better men than the *Holy Apostles* were ; I shall desire no more, and

and I am sure they can never prove so much, for they that pretend to it, declare as great an ignorance, as St. Peter did a sin, in denying his Lord and Master: and there are many other known circumstances, which made St. Paul prove him blame-worthy to his face.

And for the *Apostles* being in error, we have not onely the examples of the *Apostles* themselves, who in the time of our *Saviour's* Passion, being scandalized, lost their faith in him, and I believe the Papists will not say they could lose their faith in our blessed *Saviour Christ* without error; and therefore our Saviour af-

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ter his Resurrection upbraided them with their incredulity, and called *Thomas* incredulous for denying the Resurrection in the Twentieth of St. John.

And further 'tis most apparent that the very *Apostles* themselves, even after the sending the *Holy Ghost*, did through inadvertency, or prejudice, continue sometime in an error, contrary to a revealed truth; And if the Papists will not own to know this truth, they may be fully satisfied of it in the story of the *Acts of the Apostles*, where they may plainly read that notwithstanding our *Saviours* express warrant and injuncti-

on to the Apostles to go and preach to all Nations. Yet notwithstanding, till St. Peter was better informed by a vision from Heaven, and by the conversion of **Cornelius**, (both St. Peter and the rest of the Church, held it unlawful for them to go and Preach the Gospel to any but the Jewes. Now since we can prove that St. Peter did err, and that the Church composed partly of the *Holy Apostles* themselves, who were blessed with, and inspired by the *Holy Ghost*, could mistake, and that there is no man free from sin, and yet that the Body of men that make up the *Popish Church* should be infallible, is I confess

fess beside my Faith, to believe, or reason to comprehend.

For sure if the *Roman* Church had been esteem'd by the *Apostles* infallible, what needed the *Apostles* any other Creed, than this short Creed, *I believe the Roman Church* infallible, and that would have been more effectual to keep the believers of it, from Heresie, and in the true Faith, than this Apostolical Creed we now have.

And sure the *Papists* cannot but believe with us, that those holy men that wrote the New Testament, were not onely good men, but also men that were desirous to direct

direct us in the plainest and surest way to Heaven. And the *Papists* cannot also but believe with us, that they were likewise men very sufficiently instructed by the Spirit of God, in all the necessary points of the Christian Faith : Therefore certainly 'tis most rational to believe, they could not be ignorant of this *unum necessarium*, that all Faith is no Faith, except we believe the Church of *Rome*, was design'd by God to be the Guide of Faith, as the Church of *Rome* believes, and would have us believe so too.

We also further believe, and that with great reason too,

too, that the Writers of the New Testament were wise men, especially being they were assisted by the Spirit of wisdom; and such that must know, that an uncertain Guide was as bad as none at all; and yet after all this, is it possible for a Philosophical or contemplative man; nay, for any man that has reason or common sense, after all these suppositions, to believe that none among these holy Writers of the New Testament should remember, (*ad rei memoriam.*) To set down plainly this most necessary Doctrine, not so much as once, that we were to believe the *Roman* Church infallible.

Again,

Again, that none of the *Evangelists* should so much as once name this Popish necessary point of Faith, if they had esteem'd it necessary for us to believe it, when St. Paul says, *He kept not back any thing that was profitable for us* and sure the Papists cannot deny, but what is necessary to salvation, must be very profitable: And St. Luke also plainly tells Christians, his intent was to write all things necessary. And sure it stands also with reason, that when St. Paul wrote to the *Romans*, he would have congratulated this their extraordinary privilege, if he had believ'd it belong'd to them.

And

And though the *Romans* bring it as a great Argument for them that St. *Paul* tells them, *Their Faith is spoken all the world over*. Yet pray let them moderate those thoughts with this consideration, that St. *Paul* said the very same thing to the *Tbeſſalonians*; and let them further consider this, that if the *Roman* Faith had been the Rule of Faith for all the world for ever, as the Papists hold, sure St. *Paul* would have forborne to put the *Romans* in fear of an impossibility (for though railery is much in Fashion now, sure 'twas not then) that they also, nay the whole Church of the Gentiles, if

P they

they did not look to their standing , might fall into infidelity, as the *Jews* had done,
I Eph. 11.

And methinks it also stands with great reason , that the *Apostles* writing so often of Hereticks , and Antichrist, should have given the Christian world this (as Papists pretend) onely sure Preservative from them , to be guided by the infallible Church of *Rome* , and not to separate from it, upon the pain of damnation.

Methinks also St. Peter , St. James , and St. Jude , in their Catholick *Epistles*, would not have forgot giving Christians this Catholick direction

on of following the *Roman* Church ; and St. John instead of saying , *He that believes that Jesus is the Christ , and born of God ,* might have said , *He that adheres to the Doctrine of the Roman* Church , and lives according to it , is a good Christian ; and by this mark you shall know him. In a word , can there be any thing more irrational , than to believe , that none of these holy men , who were so desirous of mens salvation , should so much as once remember to write , that we were to obey the *Roman* Church , but leave it to be collected from uncertain principles , and by more un-

certain consequences.

So that upon the whole, I cannot without much wonder, look on the Pope's confidence, and the *Papists* credulity, in esteeming the Pope or his Councils to be an infallible Guide; sure either they never read what they ought to believe, or else they will not believe what they read, though it be never so known a Truth, and worthy of belief: for if they did, they could never believe the infallibility of the Popish Church. for indeed if they would read the Popish story; or, as I may well call it, the Civil Wars of the Popes, you shall find, as I said before, Pope against

against Pope , Councils a-
gainst Councils ; some Fathers
against others , nay , some
against themselves ; new Tra-
ditions brought in , and old
ones turn'd out ; one Church
against another ; nay , the
Church of one Age against
the Church of another. In a
word , the Papists say , their
Church is infallible , and all
other Christians besides them-
selves , though more in num-
ber than they , absolutely de-
ny it ; and yet we must for
all that believe the Popish
Church infallible.

And to speak the plain
Truth , and in a word to un-
ravel the real cause of the
Grandeur of the Church of

Rome, above all other Churches, is onely this; *Rome* was the Imperial Town of the Empire, and its Greatnes was given by men, and not God; and when afterwards *Constantinople* was the Imperial City, they Decreed, that the Church of *Constantinople* should have equal Priviledges and Dignities with that of *Rome*.

And now to end this Discourse, I desire you will please to consider this Conclusion, which is, that after all that the Papists have said, be it never so much and mighty to shew the infallibility of their Church, I am verily perswaded they can-

cannot shew more, if so much, out of the Scriptures, for their Church, as the smal-lest society of Christians met together in prayer, can for themselves, *that when two or three are met together in my name, I will be amongst them* *says the Lord.* And now I have just done this small dis-course, and the Sun is just up-on finishing this dayes visit. I can very readily follow that holy advice of not *letting it go down in my anger:* (which I thank God I have to none living) and therefore am in so much Charity with the Papists, as to wish that nei-ther they, nor Protestants, might wast their pretious time

time in meer speculative controversies about words: and ceremonies, which of themselves will never carry us to **Heaven**; but that we may spend our time like wise Christians in the wayes, and fear of God, which is the onely beginning of wisedm; and not consume it in studying and maintaining of Disputes, and factions, but if we must still differ, let **Protestants**, and **Papists** differ in opinions, but as *Aristotle*, and *Cicero* did, who, though they were of differing Judgments touching the natures of *souls*, yet both of them agreed in the main, that all men had *souls*, and souls of the same nature.

And

And as Phisitians though they dispute whether the Brain or the Heart be the principle part of man, yet that all men have Brains, and Heart they sufficiently agree in ; So though *Protestants* esteem one part of the Church doctrine, and *Papists* set a higher value on another part, yet the Soul of the Church may be in both of them, and though the Papists account that a necessary truth, which the Protestants account neither, necessary, nor perhaps true; yet in truth, truly necessary they both agree, *viz.* The Apostles Creed, and that Faith, Hope, and Charity, are necessary to Salvation ; And lastly

lastly though *Papists* hold, they may be justified by their works, and *Protestants* hold none can be justified barely by them, (in regard of the imperfections of their works) yet on the other side, we so much agree with the *Papists*, as to esteem none can be justified without them, for without Repentance, and Charity, none can be good, they being both like Health to our bodies, the want of which is sufficient to disturb all other pleasures. Therefore when we read St. Pauls *Treatise of justification by Faith, without the works of the Law.* Let us at the same time read what he writes to the

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the **Corinthians** concerning
the absolute necessity of that
Excellent vertue of **Charity**,
and they will reconcile one
another ; and I wish, *that we
were all so reconciled in the uni-
ty of the Spirit, and in the bond
of peace.* And that you **Ma-
dam** may be the sooner recon-
cil'd to me, for this tedious-
ness ; I shall now make a con-
clusion , which after such an
overgrown letter, must needs
be the best complement that
can be made by,

Madam

yours &c.

*London the 24. of
Feb. 1673.*



